NOTES IN THE PROVINCES.

A new chapel at Wombourne, Staffordshire, has been opened: it is built of brick and stone in the Norman style. The length is 53 feet by 26 feet in width, having at the north-west angle a turret containing spire for a future gallery. It will accommodate 165 adults and 104 children: for the latter a platform, raised a few inches above the isle level, is parted off at the east end by a screen seven feet high. The architect is Mr. Bidlake, of Wolverhampton; the builder Mr. Derry, under the same architect.——A new school-house, with residence, school, and class-rooms in connection with the Independent chapel, has been commenced at Bilston. The builder is Mr. Hickman.——The Exeter Diocesan Architectural Society held its general meeting on the 8th of May, when the annual volume of the Society's transactions was distributed to subscribers. Papers were read of Mr. Spence (by the secretary) on the manor-house and chapel of Fardell; by Mr. Ashworth on the Architectural Antiquities of Dartmoor and its border churches; by Rev. G. Cox and Mr. White on Ecclesiastical Architecture.—— Wootton Church, Lincolnshire, was re-opened on Friday in week before last. It has been closed about eleven months, and has undergone considerable repairs and additions. The whole of the interior fittings, which were in the very worst taste, have been removed; and the windows and stonework generally repaired, new work being inserted where necessary. The nave and aisles have been covered with a new roof, and slated. The chancel has been entirely rebuilt, at the expense of the Earl of Yarborough, lay rector. The interior is fitted up with open seats of uniform size. The pulpit is of Malta stone, and richly decorated. The font is of Caen stone. The open-timbered roofs of the nave, aisle, and chancel, and the seating, are of deal, stained and varnished to imitate oak. The whole work, internal and external, has been executed under the direction of Mr. William Day Keyworth, of Hull, architect.—— For years beyond memory there have been hanging in the vestry of Keynsham Church two old pictures, hardly traceable through dirt and smoke. A short time since somebody took to washing them with soap and water, when one was discovered to represent the "Passion of our Lord," and seemed to be so remarkable a picture, that the vestry began to inquire among the parishioners if they knew anything of its origin. One very old woman said she recollected hearing, when she was a girl, that it was painted "by some foreign painter," and after a little recollected his name was "Master Holbein." The old woman knew nothing of art, and her authority is therefore considered a valuable one; besides, the picture is said to be marked by those striking peculiarities which distinguish the pencil of this old master. The vicar at once claimed the pictures as his property. The vestry, however, dispute his right.——Considerable improvements are in progress at the old church of Croydon. The unsightly and incongruous windows which have so long disfigured the clerestory, are in course of removal, and will be replaced by two windows of correct design, filled in with stained glass, and harmonise with the arcades of the nave and chancel. The whole of the work is under the direction of Mr. Ben. Ferrey. The cost of one of the new windows is defrayed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the remainder are contributed by parishioners.——The new district church about to be erected at the sole cost of the Archbishop of Canterbury, at Broadstreet, will be commenced very shortly: it will be in the Early Decorated style, and the materials employed, flint and Kentish rag stone. The architect is Mr. Teulon. There were three contractors, viz., Messrs. Nixon and Hayward, London, 3,350*l.*; Mr. Harris, Croydon, 2,860*l.* (contractor for St. Peter's, now near completion); Mr. Higgs, London, 2,750*l.* The contract has been given to the lowest tenderer, Mr. Higgs. The erection of schools in proximity to the church, by the Archbishop, is spoken of.——The first stone of a new school-room, also to be licensed for Divine service, was laid at Paddock-wood, Brenchley, on 9th inst. The buildings will be in the Early English style, and formed of the Kentish rag, with dressings of freestone, dug in the parish. Mr. John Hooker, of Brenchley, is the architect, and the contractor is Mr. Chalklin, of Tunbridge.—— At Southampton the Dock Company are extending their works by the construction of an inner dock of 9 acres in extent, with an entrance from the open dock. The works are in full operation, and the new dock is to be opened before the end of the year. The estimate of their engineer, Mr. Alfred Giles, is under 20,000*l.* The Dock Company have also lately erected, at a cost of 7,300*l.* a large sugar house capable of refining 150 tons a-week. This has been at work since Christmas, and is a valuable adjunct to the trade of the port.——St. Sepulchre's Church, Northampton, was struck by lightning on Saturday week. Some of the stones were forced out and thrown to the southern extremity of the churchyard, a distance of several yards, and the western glass face of the clock was shattered. The gas pipe was rent asunder. The spire was found to have been injured to such an extent as to render it inadvisable to chime. A more careful examination on Monday showed that the injury was more severe than had been anticipated, and Mr. Miles, the county surveyor, has stated his belief that a strong north wind is not unlikely to bring the whole spire to the ground. It was already in a dilapidated condition, but the old fissures have been widened, and new ones made. It is proposed to raise a subscription for the restoration of the structure.——In course of five days from the opening of the new baths at Birmingham, 3,000 persons were admitted to the swimming-bath, 400 to the first-class private warm-baths, and 200 to the second. The female department was also well attended. The receipts for the five days exceeded 50*l.*——A sort of monastery is in course of erection at Edgbaston, at a cost of about 12,000*l.*, for Mr. Newman and his priestly confreres of the oratory. The building, it is said, will be very extensive, and contain three stories, and several spacious apartments including two large libraries, one to be used as a chapel till a church can be erected on land immediately adjacent. The plans of the proposed church have not yet been decided upon. It is intended to be on a somewhat magnificent scale, as it will cover, it is said, a space of ground 200 feet in length. The sacristy forms part of the building now being proceeded with.——A case of death, after long and painful illness, caused by drinking water kept in a leaden cistern, has just occurred at Egremont. In this case the cause of illness was not even suspected until it was too late to apply a remedy. The water was then analysed and found to be strongly impregnated with poison from the cistern. Where it is a matter of necessity to use lead cisterns, the most constant care should be taken that the water do not become impregnated with the lead; but this is not to be prevented by merely keeping the cistern "clean:" on the contrary, the scurf deposited on the face of the lead in many cases prevents further action of the water on the lead, and hence further poisoning of the water by the lead. The cistern, however, ought to be kept otherwise extremely clean, especially where vegetable or animal remains tend to accumulate in it.—— The committee of the Nottingham Water Works Company have recently made great efforts to render themselves capable of supplying even the remotest districts around the town with an abundance of pure water. In addition to the new works and reservoir, a great covered tank has just been completed on the highest elevation in the neighbourhood, to which the water is to be forced for further supply to the vicinity.——The erection of the new Roman Catholic church of St. Walburge, on the Maud lands, Preston, the foundation stone of which, according to the local *Guardian*, was laid on Whit-Monday in last year, was begun on Tuesday in last week. The contract for the masons' work was taken by Messrs. Cooper and Tullis, of Preston, for 2,967*l.* The architect is Mr. Joseph Hansom. The length of the church is to be 165 feet, width 85 feet, height of walls 35 feet, and to ridge of roof 75 feet. There will be a tower and spire: the square at the base of the tower will be nearly 40 feet, and the height of the spire nearly 300 feet. A bell—one of a peal—for it will weigh 2¼ tons, and cost 400*l.* The tower and spire form a separate contract. Upwards of 3,000*l.* have been subscribed towards the whole cost.——For the enlargement of St. Mary's church, Boston Spa, 800*l.* have been subscribed. Additional sittings to the number of 250 will be made, two-thirds of them free. The contractors for the works are Messrs. T. Noble and G. Roberts, of Clifford. The architect is Mr. Atkinson, of York.—— At Kidderminster, while some workmen were lately repairing the flooring of a stable at the back of the Clarence Inn in Coventry-street, it gave way and fell into a vault beneath. An attempt was made to explore the vault, but owing to foul air abandoned for a while, and proper measures taken to purify it. At length, on descending with a light, a vault was discovered, about 9 feet in length by 6 in width, in which were two masses of animal matter, 2 or 3 feet thick, apparently of two human bodies, lying side by side, the remains of an ancient pickaxe, the handle very much decayed, and the iron corroded, though still very heavy, and several very curiously formed pipes. The cellar which immediately adjoins the vault is remarkable for antiquarian remains. It is very ancient, of Norman architecture, arched, and having a doorway and windows in excellent preservation, the material of which the walls, &c. are constructed being of the same kind as that used in Dover Castle. It is said to bear every mark of being the crypt of some church or ancient religious house. The house underneath which these interesting remains exist (though now much modernised) is spoken of in Nash's History of Worcestershire as the oldest in the town. A few yards of a subterraneous passage leading from the cellar were explored a short time ago, but further prosecution of the work abandoned in consequence of the soil having fallen into it.——A meeting has been held at Stockton-upon-Tees to consider business relating to the report of the Government engineer on the conservancy of the river Tees. Extracts from the report of Mr. Baid, the Government engineer, were given, from which it appeared that the best situation for the establishment of docks was the town of Stockton, and that the river Tees might advantageously be made navigable to Yarm. Measures to carry out the plan alluded to in the report are to be proceeded with, the Tees Navigation Company and the inhabitants combining together for this purpose.—— A curious winding staircase has been discovered on the site of the old castle of Berwick-upon-Tweed. The opening of this staircase, which is admired, it is said, for its fine appearance, is on a level with and behind the sheds at the railway station, and has been cleared out to a depth of about 14 feet, the first landing place being there arrived at, where there is a vault, with the various doors of what are probably so many subterranean passages branching from it. The vault has not yet been cleared out, but it is thought the staircase must go much lower down.—— Messrs. Foster and Son, of Keswick, black lead pencil manufacturers, having fitted up their mill with new machinery, introducing several improvements, lately invited their workmen to a supper, in commemoration of the occasion.——The cellar habitations of Dublin are about to be suppressed, and measures are in progress for the opening of model lodging-houses.

LECTURE ON ART.—Mr. Hammersley, principal of the Manchester School of Design, last week delivered a lecture at Warrington under the auspices of the directors of the Mechanics' Institution there, on "Art, as a question of education for the designer and workman, but equally so for those who use the productions of industry." Mr. Hammersley at some length advocated the universality of art, and deprecated any exclusiveness in its pursuit. He urged the establishment of a School of Design in the town.

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